THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government proposes to raise allocation in the X Plan for research and development on oilseeds in the country.

The total investment in oilseed research funded by ICAR to its institutes and All India Coordinated Research Projects on nine oilseed crops (groundnut, soyabean, rapeseed-mustard, sunflower, safflower, linseed, sesame, niger and castor) oilpalm and oil bearing trees is proposed to be raised from Rs. 14493.79 lakh in IX Plan to Rs. 24757.82 lakh in X Plan.

Under Technology Mission on Oilseeds and Pulses and Maize an allocation of Rs. 950 crore has been made in the X Plan compared to Rs. 808.63 crore provided in the IX Plan for promotion of oilseed, pulse and maize production in the country.

Steps have been taken to develop improved varieties and hybrids of oilseeds with better yield potential than existing cultivars. Integrated pest and nutrient management programs, quality seed production and front line demonstrations have been given high priority. A plan has been drawn up to strengthen research in biotechnology during the X Plan for development of varieties resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses.

Policy on GM crop and food

5147. SHRI ABANI ROY :
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to redraft the policy on GM crop and food;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the GM crop and food policy adopted earlier was ineffective to deal with the various problems faced by Government;

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(e) whether Government are inclined to develop GM food in the country; and

(f) what is the opinion of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee on GM food?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (d) The release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) into the environment is governed by the "Rules

for Manufacture, Use, Import/Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/ Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells". The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) has been constituted for approval of activities involving large scale use of hazardous microorganisms and recombinants in research and industrial production as well as approval of proposals relating to release of Genetically Engineered Organisms and products into the environment including experimental field trials. With a view to synergise the efforts and activities of the relevant Ministries/Departments and maintain effective coordination and implementation of the existing policy, an inter-Ministerial Meeting on G.M. Crop/ Food Policy was held in the Ministry of Environment and Forests on 26th February, 2003, in which it was decided to constitute a smaller working group with representatives from the relevant Ministries/Departments to address these issues.

(e) and (f) The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee under the Ministry of Environment and Forests is responsible for the approval of proposals relating to release of genetically engineered organisms & products, including GM food into the environment.

Excess potato problem of UP

5148. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the Central Uttar Pradesh has a bumper 102 lakh tonnes production of potatoes this year;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the potato farmers in Central Uttar Pradesh are devastated because neither NAFED nor the State Government have come forward to buy the potatoes inspite of assurance given earlier; and

(c) the action Government propose to take to prevent the wastage of potato?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE-MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Yes Sir. The State Govt. has reported 102 lakh tonnes production of potato in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

(b) In view of the bumper harvest of potato in UP and on the request of State Govt., the Government of India sanctioned Market Intervention Scheme for procurement of 1.00 lakh MTs FAQ potato to safeguard the interest of potato growers in UP. Out of one lakh MTs, 50,000 MTs were to be procured by NAFED and the remaining 50,000 MTs by State designated agencies. NAFED has procured 7,340 quintals of potato and the State nominated agencies have procured of 1,515 quintals. Besides, NAFED has also purchased 12,280 quintals potato and 2,230 quintals potato seed under their normal business operations.